

Amendment  
Serial No. 09/836,096

Docket No. PHFR 000041

### IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of controlling a plurality set of transcoding channels (~~TC[1] to TC[n]~~), a transcoding channel (~~TC[i]~~) allowing an input compressed data signal (~~ICS[i]~~) encoded at an input bit rate (~~Rin[i]~~) to be converted into an output compressed data signal (~~OCS[i]~~) encoded at an output bit rate wherein a regulation process uses quantization scales and the input compressed data signal to obtain the output bit rate (~~Rout[i]~~), said method of controlling comprising :
  - a step of computing an indicator of a compressed data quality for the respective transcoding channels, said indicator being computed from the input compressed data signal independent of the regulation process (~~ICS[i]~~), and
  - a step of allocating the output bit rate (~~Rout[i]~~) to the transcoding channel (~~TC[i]~~) from a total output bit rate (~~Rtot~~), its corresponding indicator and a sum of the indicators of the transcoding channels.
2. (Original) A method of controlling a set of transcoding channels as claimed in claim 1, wherein the indicator is computed from an average, over a set of encoded pictures, of a function of an average quantization scale over a picture and a number of bits used to encode the same picture.
3. (Original) A method of controlling a set of transcoding channels as claimed in claim 2, wherein the indicator is computed from a weighted average of a set of the averages calculated over the set of encoded pictures.
4. (Currently Amended) A controller (~~CONT~~) for controlling a set of transcoders (~~TC[1] to TC[n]~~), a transcoder (~~TC[i]~~) allowing an input compressed data signal (~~ICS[i]~~) encoded at an input bit rate (~~Rin[i]~~) to be converted into an output compressed data signal (~~OCS[i]~~) encoded at an output bit rate wherein a regulation

Amendment  
Serial No. 09/836,096

Docket No. PHFR 000041

process uses quantization scales and the input compressed data signal to obtain the output bit rate ( $R_{out}[i]$ ), said controller comprising :

~~means for computing~~ a processor configured to determine an indicator of a compressed data quality for the respective transcoders, said indicator being computed from the input compressed data signal independent of the regulation process ( $ICS[i]$ ), and

~~means for allocating~~ allocate the output bit rate ( $R_{out}[i]$ ) to the transcoder ( $TC[i]$ ) from a total output bit rate ( $R_{tot}$ ), its corresponding indicator and a sum of the indicators of the transcoders.

5. (Currently Amended) A data multiplexing system comprising :
- a set of transcoders ( $TC[1]$  to  $TC[n]$ ) for converting input compressed data signals ( $ICS[1]$  to  $ICS[n]$ ) encoded at an input bit rate ( $R_{in}[1]$  to  $R_{in}[n]$ ) into output compressed data signals ( $OCS[1]$  to  $OCS[n]$ ) encoded at an output bit rate, wherein a regulation process uses quantization scales and the input compressed data signal to obtain the output bit rate ( $R_{out}[1]$  to  $R_{out}[n]$ ),

a controller ( $CONT$ ) for controlling the set of transcoders and comprising :

means for computing an indicator of a compressed data quality for the respective transcoders, said indicator being computed from the input compressed data signal independent of the regulation process ( $ICS[i]$ ),

means for allocating the output bit rate ( $R_{out}[i]$ ) to the transcoder ( $TC[i]$ ) from a total output bit rate ( $R_{tot}$ ), its corresponding indicator and a sum of the indicators of the transcoders, and

a multiplexer ( $MUX$ ) for providing a multiplexed data signal ( $MS$ ) at the total output bit rate ( $R_{tot}$ ) by multiplexing of the output compressed data signals ( $OCS[1]$  to  $OCS[n]$ ).

6. (Original) A computer program product for a controller ( $CONT$ ) that comprises a set of instructions, which, when loaded into the controller, causes the controller to carry out the method of controlling as claimed in claims 1 to 3.